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January 10th, 1908.

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THE NUR AF SHAN

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY.

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No. 2

Editorial Notes.

"Many a heart is missing great blessing because it is shriveled from failure to appreciate the lesser ones."

Any subscriber sending us the name and address of a new subscriber with the subscription price in advance for one year may receive post paid one copy of either the *Ganjina-i-Islam* or the *Satyarath Parkash Darpan* (Paper covers). This special offer will continue until March 1st, 1908.

We present in another column an account of the organization of the Provincial Muslim League for the Punjab. This is a part of the program for the organization of an All India Muslim League, which was determined at the Muhammadan Educational Conference held some time since at Dacca in Bengal. We presume this movement is also in line with the Pan-Islamic movement, which looks to a world-wide Muslim Organization for the betterment of the interests of Muslims throughout the world.

It is natural and wise for Indian Muhammadans to seek concerted action and may be regarded an outgrowth of the National Congress movement, with which they did not fully sympathize. If it result in the arousing of thought and the disenthralment of reason and the consequent adoption of modern ideas as to society and religion, the movement will prove a benefit to themselves and to the country as a whole. We doubt whether the Muslims as a

whole are prepared for anything so comprehensive as this. Educated men generally will favour it and by patient effort may accomplish much. We shall watch this movement with much interest.

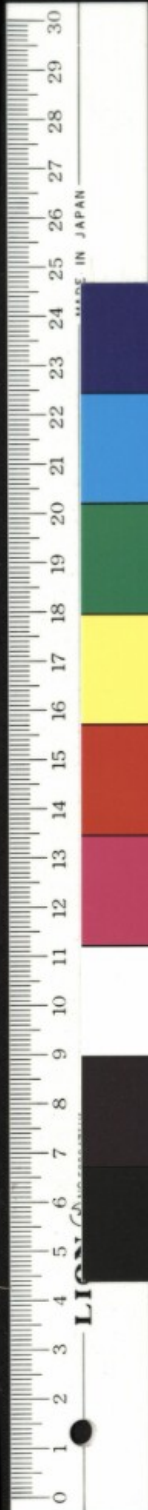
In *The East and the West* for October there is a most interesting account of a Muslim Conference held at Mecca (March 27 to April 10, 1899) to consider the causes for the world-wide decadence of Islam. An account of this conference was published at Port Said in 1316 A.H (1899) giving what purports to be the minutes of the meeting. The meeting was representative, the members hailing from almost all Muslim countries in the world, including "the Happy Englishman." The fact that the names of the delegates are not given, but only the names of the country or nation to which they belong, added to the fact that the "Minutes" were published under the English flag, suggests what is probably true, that this Conference did not represent the orthodox party subservient to the *Sanikh-ul-Islam*. It is all the same significant of the unrest among Muslims and their growing impatience with the ultra-conservative and non-progressive attitude of their priests and rulers in Muslim countries. We hope it portends the glad day, when Muslims shall be willing to seriously study Him who is the real source and inspiration of what is called Christian civilization in the world.

Among the scores of reasons assigned for the decadence of Islam, the following were of special interest:

1. The doctrine of Fatalism which numbs and paralyzes energy.
2. The ascetic doctrine which depreciates the value of what the world can give.
3. Political causes.
4. The suggestion is that extensive reform is needed all along the line.

To illustrate the need of reform the Muslim chronicler goes on to say, what must be distasteful to Moslems in general: "Wherever there are two neighbouring countries, districts, villages or houses, the one Muslim and the other non-Muslim, the Muslims are less energetic, worse organised in all matters personal and social, and less skillful in the arts and trades than the non-Muslims though superior to the others in the virtues of trustworthiness, courage and liberality. "This sweeping assertion" says the magazine article, "he was afterwards induced to re-triet, when the Indian gentleman pointed out that the condition of the Muslims was superior, or not inferior to that of Pagans and Buddhists. * * * * * Evidently the assertion of the Chairman, so far as it referred to Christians (and perhaps Parsis and Jew) was unchallenged. Altogether seventy six causes were assigned by the various members of Conference for the condition of things already noted.

One of the causes for Moslem decadence was "neglect of female education," and to this we would give emphasis. The key to right training of children, both as to intellectual and moral culture, is the mother influence. Unless Muslims will see to the education



of their daughters they cannot hope for that strong mother influence which develops and cultivates the virtues of intellect and moral character. It is encouraging to see enlightened men among the Muhammadans who realize this need and who are endeavouring to promote the establishment of schools for Moslem girls.

Let much prayer be made for the Muslim world. That it is passing through a crisis we cannot doubt. The many movements among them seem to indicate a struggle for something better than Islam can afford. What shall be the result? Shall it be the establishment of a so-called reformed Islam with a still longer antagonism to the claims of the exalted Jesus, the Messiah of all centuries, or shall it be the turning away from cisterns which can hold no water to the wells of salvation which flow from Calvary's Hill?

EDITORIAL.

THE FIFTH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN INDIA

The General Assembly of the Indian Presbyterian Church, met in the Mission Church, Cornwallis Square, Calcutta at 10 o'clock Dec. 28th. Ninety-four delegates were elected by the Presbyteries, representing every province in the Empire. The majority of these were present and answered to the roll-call.

The retiring Moderator Rev. M. B. Nikambe, of Bombay, opened the assembly by preaching a sermon on Isaiah: III-5, in which he canvassed the obstacles in the way of the Gospel in India, and catalogued the works already done, and the influences behind the work of the Church. After the sermon, the assembly roll was called and the election of a new moderator was in order. The Nominating Committee appointed at the last Assembly presented the name of Sir Andrew Fraser K.C.S.I., Lieut. Governor of Bengal, who was elected by acclamation. In a brief address the moderator expressed the ap-

preciation of the honour which had been conferred upon him and the pleasure he had in serving the Assembly because of the love which he had for the Church in India. The morning session was closed by the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

After adjournment, the Assembly proceeded to the College ground of the U. F. Mission to witness the laying of the corner stone of a new Science Hall.

The union of Presbyterian Churches in India has facilitated the union of the two Presbyterian Colleges, so that henceforth there shall be one strong College of instead two, comparatively weak ones. In the afternoon the Assembly was entertained at a garden party at Belvedere, which is the Government House of the Province of Bengal. Sir Andrew and Lady Fraser received the guests as they arrived. The Viceroy's Band provided the music, rendering a full program of Scottish songs.

The Sunday morning service in the Assembly Hall was conducted by the Rev. W. Weston, of the Madras Christian College, who preached upon the subject of *the Christian and his worldly Environment*. His text was I Chron. xv: 17, "But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Aza was perfect all his days." The preacher discoursed upon three main points: (1) The contrast between the world's ideals and those of the man of God: (2) The man of God and his attitude towards the evils in the world and (3) The man of God and his attitude toward the evils in his own heart. The impulse of a good man, in a ruler's place, is to banish the high places of evil by a royal mandate, but experience proves all such efforts at reform to be but partially successful. The reform, if it is to be permanent, must be backed by the living example. Reformers must themselves be reformed. The man of God will inevitably draw men about him, who filled with His Spirit, will lead men to pull down their own "high places" of evil. In the inner life of good men there are many "high places" which make him ashamed,

ed, but why? Only because the Spirit of God reveals them to him and so leads him to repentance and shame, and enables him to triumph over sin and brings him into the joy of the Holy Spirit.

The point of this discourse is that the Christian cannot lift India from its degradation in vice, idolatry, sordid love of wealth and power, by condemning the evils he sees or by floating with the stream of popular opinion, seeking how he may pass through the world with the least possible trouble or annoyance, not to say with the greatest possible honour. The man of God must be separate from the world, though living in it and must hold to his high ideals that he may not only be faithful to the truth but also be able to help others who have adopted a lower ideal.

We will notice later on some of the chief points of interest during the remaining days of the Assembly Meeting.

THE EDITOR.

TEMPERANCE & PURITY.

The problem of temperance reform in India is difficult because the many advocates of temperance are satisfied to get up meetings and to make stirring speeches and secure signatures to pledges to abstain. This is all well but it is not enough. There must be engendered somehow or other a desire to put these principles into practice.

One plan suggests itself to us, to form bands or associations in all the schools of the land looking to the inauguration of plans for the promotion of temperance among young men—not merely in regard to spirituous or alcoholic liquors but in regard to injurious drugs and narcotics of all kinds. A beginning has been undertaken by the Punjab Mission. We hope it will set the pace for other schools as well as its own.

The presumption of this age is a desire to be new and striking.

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COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN AFGHANISTAN.

Commercial development is now regarded in many parts of Afghanistan as a matter of course, but that was not always the case. When the late Amir, not long ago, attempted to introduce foreign goods and to establish manufactories, he was violently opposed. He persevered, however, first introducing hand-power, then steam-power equipments, till today at Kabul there are engines of 100 horse-power, transported over rugged mountain passes at great labour, says the *Indian Trade Journal*. Within the past fifteen years many new industries have been started, particularly at Kabul, and these are now chiefly manned by Afghan who have displaced the experts first introduced to work them. Next to the elaborate machinery for making war materials—cannons, rifles and cartridges—the Government of the country is said to be most interested in machinery for mining and extracting ores, and the demand for this class of machinery is likely to largely increase. The reason for this is not far to seek. Afghanistan, says Mr Clarke (a Commercial Agent from the United States), may some day be one of the world's great mining districts. It is known to have mines of rubies, topaz, lapis-lazuli, marble, and other stones; iron, lead, copper, antimony, other metallic ores; sulphur and and several of the earthly alkaline and metallic salts. Coal is also found; and is believed to be extensive near the iron mines. The lead, iron, and precious stone mines are partially worked by the Government with modern machinery, but the mining of the country is mostly carried on by very crude processes, and the bulk of the mineral wealth is as yet not touched. According to the few European geologists who have had access to the country, mineral deposits of various kinds are rich and extensive and there are to be found both gold and silver in paying quantities. In addition to large coal, iron and other mines, Afghanistan has numerous waterfalls available for power.

Pioneer.

If Socrates died like a sage, Jesus died like a God.—Rousseau.

THE MURALI—WHAT?

Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao seems to think that a *Murali*, dedicated to a temple or idol by what is called marriage and, in consequence, leading the life of a courtesan, is, according to Hindu law, a married woman and that the recent judgment of the Bombay High Court, which has decided that a *Murali* is not a married woman under that law is wrong. But the learned Dewan Bahadur does not appear to know that both the Bombay and the Madras High Courts have now for forty years and more declined to recognise as lawful the so-called marriage of a minor girl with an idol, and her dedication to a Temple because it renders her incapable of contracting a legal and valid marriage under the Hindu law. For instance, so long ago as 1869 the Bombay High Court held that the dedication of a minor girl to a temple as a *Blavin* and her so-called marriage with an idol rendered her parents or others, who so dedicated her, liable to be punished. The judgment said:—"By her dedication to the temple Sandri was doomed to be a *Blavin* and in all likelihood a prostitute for life, and we hold, therefore, that this was a disposal of the child which by the law in question is made a penal offence." What a *Blavin* is in Ratnagiri, a *Murali* is in the Deccan; and the law has long since been settled that those who dedicate a minor girl to a temple as a *Murali* by the so-called ceremony of marriage with an idol are liable to be dealt with as offenders against the criminal law. The Courts have held such marriages to be mere cloaks for a life of immorality, and therefore declined to recognise them as marriages in the sense of the term known to Hindu law. And this has been the law, not only in this Presidency, but also in the Presidency of Madras, to which Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao belongs, ever since the Penal Code came into existence; and the recent judgment of the Bombay High Court, criticised by Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, has merely followed the established law of that and the Madras High Court in holding that a *Murali* does not become a married woman by reason of her so-called marriage with, and dedication to, a god.

THE TIMES OF INDIA in C. & M. Gazette.

There are unacceptable forms of sacrifice. We may sell a part and reserve the best wine for selfish use. We may find our reward in the praise of men, and thereby lose the higher consolations. We may bestow our goods without faith, and make our sacrifice a penance. But the gift that is inspired at Calvary is a whole burnt offering, meet for the Master's use.

THE PLAGUE FLEA.

TO THE EDITOR (*Pioneer*.)

Sir,—With reference to the subject of prevention of plague infection, will you kindly allow me to ask whether the natives have been generally informed that the chief danger to be avoided is the access to their persons of fleas carried by plague-stricken rats? While I was in India the rat *itself* was believed to infect food and dwellings with plague, but even then most Hindus would not either kill or help to kill them, so now probably they will not destroy plague inoculating fleas, but they will, if informed of the great danger that has been proved to exist from these vermin, take precaution to keep them from their bodies. In the second place I would ask if investigations have been made as to whether fleas can be repelled effectually from making their attacks by the use of any ointments or strong smelling substances, such as eucalyptus oil saturated with camphor, or kerosine oil and boric acid in alcohol or with creosote for instance? Doubtless the natives themselves know of such substances that are harmless to human beings, but fatal or repulsive to fleas and other insects that would give them plague. Of course inoculation with Haffkine's preparation is still essential, but the means I am suggesting seem to be very desirable even in the case of persons that have been duly inoculated and, therefore, the requisite information as to the danger and the best and cheapest preparation for avoiding it should be widely distributed by the sanitary authorities after experiments have been made with guinea pigs anointed therewith and exposed in the haunts of plague-carrying rats together with the guinea pigs not so treated. All these may have been already done; if so, I crave pardon for occupying so much space, but request still the details I have asked for above through your columns, for the question appears to me to be a very important one.

LATE INDIAN CIVIL SERVANT
(COVENANTED.)

Pioneer.

The darkest lives are those which have no windows opening on Heaven.



TELEGRAMS.

London, January 2.

Admiral Phillibert telegraphs that the French carried yesterday the stronghold of the Medina tribesmen. One man was killed and three tuailleurs wounded.

A transport has gone ashore on the rocks five miles south of Casa Blanca. In addition to her crew she has a detachment of troops and horses aboard. The cruiser *Desaix* has left Tangier to assist.

Operation by General Lyautey against the Beni-rassen are regarded as terminated. The troops engaged will be repatriated forthwith.

It is declared in Lisbon that the situation in Portuguese Guinea is exaggerated but it is admitted that situation is unsatisfactory.

The British Antarctic expedition under Lieutenant Shackleton left Lyttleton yesterday at noon for the Antarctic seas.

London, January 3.

Keen frost is being experienced throughout the United Kingdom, with a fierce east wind. Many deaths have occurred from cold.

The first German battleship of the *Dreadnought* type will be launched at the end of February.

The transport *Nice* is a total loss.

The troops have been landed.

Lloyds' agent wires from Jeddah that the Russian steamer *Gregory March* has stranded on a reef and her position is critical, and 1,900 pilgrims have been landed.

Allahabad, January 3.

The *Peineer* understands, that the third and final instalment of the war indemnity imposed upon Tibet will be paid by the Chinese Government this month in Calcutta.

London, January 4.

The correspondent of the *Morning Post* at Washington telegraphs that the Government has addressed a friendly remonstrance to Japan owing to the fact that immigration has been increasing in spite of the informal agreement that it would be virtually prohibited by Japan refusing passports.

The correspondent of the *Tribune* telegraphs from Washington that President Roosevelt has authorized Mr. Root to notify Japan that if Congress passes the Japanese Labour Excluding Bill he will veto it.

The correspondent of the *Tribune* at Vancouver states that the immigration of Japanese from Honolulu is increasing.

London, January 5.

A telegram from Washington states that President Roosevelt, Mr. Root and Mr. Metcalf have had a lengthy conference regarding the Japanese situation.

London, January 4.

Some coal merchants at Port Said are engaging men from the interior. Nearly four hundred have arrived and started work.

The men at Port Said are resuming work.

London, January 5.

A telegram from Port Said states that the coal strike is ended.

London, January 4.

The credit for famine relief in the Russian budget has been raised from 7,732,000 roubles to fifteen million roubles.

It is declared in Lisbon that no expedition is being sent to Portuguese Guinea at present, but that the garrisons at Bissau and Bacheo are being reinforced and two gunboats are going from Loanda.

The King of Sweden in the interview with a Stockholm paper said he had renounced a coronation as being unnecessary and not in accordance with the spirit of the age.

He had long regarded the ceremonial at the opening of Parliament as antiquated and it would be simplified.

London, January 6.

The river Dee is frozen over for seven miles, and the Thames at Windsor is also frozen over.

Abnormal warmth has succeeded the frost most suddenly.

The Salvation Army has opened an Indian Famine Fund. It will be devoted not to charity, but to the sale of cheap grain, to loans, and to aid emigration of famine-stricken people.

The committee of the International Cotton Congress held a preliminary meeting at Manchester to day.

Practically the whole of Europe, with the exception of Russia, is represented. The Japanese delegate is expected to arrive tomorrow.

Turkey has authorized the Anatolian Railway to double its capital, partly for the purpose of strengthening the line, with a view to running expresses in connection with the Bagdad Railway.

As soon as the line reaches Aleppo Turkey will subsidize an express service.

The correspondent of the *Standard* telegraphing from Ottawa says that new immigration regulations have been framed providing that the immigrant must come direct from the land of birth. This will put an end to the influx of Japanese via Hawaii.

The regulations can also be applied to European immigration via the United States.

The *Tribune* in an article expresses alarm at Mr. Smuts' uncompromising speech and fears that General Botha and his colleagues do not realise the seriousness of the imperial side of the question. The article strongly hints at the necessity for the prompt intervention of the Imperial Government. When the Transvaal and England have each said their word then is India to be considered. We are entitled to demand that the self-governing colonies shall at least conduct their affairs in a manner not to endanger the whole fabric of the Empire.

Lord Middleton, speaking at Ottawa, urged the claims of an imperialism subordinating local issues to the common weal of all the races of the Empire. India, he said, was a main prop of the Empire, and he ap-

pealed to those talking of Asiatic peril to realise this and to deal gently with British statesmen in their difficulties about India with its races numbering nearly a third of the population of the world.

A telegram received in St. Petersburg from Tabriz states that the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission has begun its labours near Urumia.

Bulgaria has presented to the powers a long list of assassination and outrages on Bulgarians by Albanians, Turks and Ottoman soldiers during the last autumn.

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